

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ST-01 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06

CCO-00 FBO-02 PER-01 SS-15 MMO-01 ABF-01 /045 W

-----081528Z 114315 /53

R 081100Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1577

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY BISSAU

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LOME 0072

FOR AF/EX AND AF/W

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP PFOR TO

SUBJ: WACASC SERVICES: LOME A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE SITE

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REF: STATE 310840

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY LOME HAS REFLECTED IN SOME DEPTH ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF REFTEL. WE CONCLUDE THAT LOME MERITS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION AS AN ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR WACASC FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS. SUCH A MOVE, HOWEVER, WOULD RAISE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

WHICH REQUIRE A MEASURED COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF POSSIBLE IMPACT OF MOVE ON US-TOGOLESE BILATERAL RELATIONS. OUR ANALYSIS IS THAT WACASC WOULD HAVE DEFINITE BUT, DOUBTLESS, CONTAINABLE IMPACT ON SUCH RELATIONS, PRIMARILY BY PLACING FACILITY OF RELATIVE IMPORTANCE TO USG HERE WHICH UNDER WORST-CASE CONDITIONS COULD BECOME POLITICAL FOOTBALL. IF WORST-CASE CONDITIONS DO NOT ARISE AND RELATIONS REMAIN ON PRESENT COMFORTABLE COURSE, PARTICULARLY IF US RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY FLOWS CAN BE FACILITATED, SHORT AND MEDIUM-TERM OUTLOOK FOR WACASC SITING IN LOME FAVORABLE.

RECOMMENDATION: EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT LOME BE CONSIDERED AS ALTERNATIVE WACASC SITE PROVIDED USG WILLING TO MAKE ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLICY ADJUSTMENTS THIS DECISION WOULD IMPLY. END SUMMARY

2. ADVANTAGES: THE TOWN'S SMALL PORT IS MODERN AND WELL RUN. FARRELL LINES VESSELS MAKE SEMI-MONTHLY CALLS. THE AIRPORT IS ALSO NEW AND EFFICIENT. LANDING CONDITIONS ARE FAVORABLE MOST OF THE YEAR--THE EXCEPTION BEING EARLY MORNINGS DURING THE NOVEMBER-JANUARY HARMATTAN SEASON WHEN ATMOSPHERE IS SO HAZY THAT SCHEDULED FLIGHT SERVICE IS SOMETIMES SUSPENDED. THE CITY ITSELF IS RELATIVELY CENTRALLY LOCATED IN THE WEST AFRICAN REGION SERVED BY WACASC.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS: WHILE WACASC APPEARS TO BE RELATIVELY AUTONOMOUS, BOTH THE OPERATION AND ITS PERSONNEL WILL REQUIRE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT WE CANNOT PRESENTLY SUPPLY.

A. OUR PRIMITIVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IS ALREADY OVERLOADED, THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC HAS INCREASED TREMENDOUSLY WHILE WE ARE EXPERIENCING A PARALLEL INCREASE IN CIRCUIT OUTAGES,
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GARBLED TRANSMISSIONS, AND MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS ON OUR CRYPTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT. OUR SOLE COMMUNICATOR CANNOT HANDLE ANY INCREASE IN TELEGRAPHIC VOLUME AT THE PRESENT TIME. GOME IS SCHEDULED FOR WATTS INSTALLATION IN CONTEXT OF BUILDING EXTENSION; WHEN WATTS SYSTEM IS FUNCTIONING AND THE SECTION ADEQUATELY STAFFED, THIS MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK WILL BE REMOVED.

B. FROM EMBASSY EXPERIENCE IN LEASING FOUR NEW RESIDENCES OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS, WE KEENLY AWARE OF PROBABLE DIFFICULTY IN LOCATING ENOUGH SUITABLE HOUSING FOR THE WACASC FAMILIES. IT POSSIBLE, IN FACT, THAT NONE MIGHT BE AVAILABLE AT ANY PRICE, UNDER SHORT-LEASE CONDITIONS. TWO OF THE RECENTLY LEASED HOUSES REQUIRED SUBSTANTIAL STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS, REWIRING AND PLUMBING MODIFICATIONS BEFORE WE COULD TAKE OCCUPANCY. WE CONCLUDE HOUSING WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE CONSTRUCTED FOR WACASC PERSONNEL.

C. OFFICE AND WAREHOUSE SPACE WOULD ALSO HAVE TO BE CONSTRUCTED.

D. OUR ANCILLARY SUPPORT SERVICES SUCH AS THE MEDICAL UNIT, PERSONNEL SECTION, GENERAL SERVICES, AND WAREHOUSING ARE BASICALLY ALL ONE-MAN SECTIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT BY THE 30 PCT INCREASE IN AMERICAN POSITIONS IN THE PAST YEAR. ANY ADDITIONAL DEMANDS ON THIS ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT WILL REQUIRE A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN THE POSTS AMERICAN AND LOCAL STAFFING COMPLEMENT AND IN ITS BUDGET. WITHOUT MORE INFORMATION ON WACASC REQUIREMENTS, THE SIZE OF THAT INCREASE CANNOT BE ESTABLISHED.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ST-01 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06

CCO-00 FBO-02 PER-01 SS-15 MMO-01 ABF-01 /045 W

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R 081100Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

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AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 LOME 0072

FOR AF/EX AND AF/W

4. COST/BENEFIT RATIO FOR GOT: FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE GOT, SITING WACASC IN LOME WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH ITS DESIRE TO MAKE TOGO A HUB OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES. MOREOVER, WACASC'S PRESENCE
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WOULD CARRY WITH IT ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR THE COUNTRY--INCREASED LOCAL EMPLOYMENT, PORT FEES, THE ECONOMIC STIMULATION OF AN INCREASED NUMBER OF AMERICANS IN A SMALL CITY. POSSIBLE COSTS TO GOT OF WACASC SITING IN LOME MIGHT INCLUDE:

A. INCREASED NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES WHO DO NOT CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO TOGOLESE DEVELOPMENT;

B. INCREASED ASSOCIATION WITH UNITED STATES;

C. POSSIBLE OFFENSE TO NIGERIA, IF A SHIFT IN WACASC'S LOCATION FOLLOWS A GON-ORDERED CLOSEDOWN.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE BURDENS OF A NEW DUTY-FREE, DIPLOMATICALLY PRIVILEGED OPERATION.

5. IMPACT ON US-TOGOLESE RELATIONS OF WACASC MOVE: INEVITABLY, SITING OF WACASC OPERATION IN LOME WOULD BE A SIGNAL. IT WOULD INDICATE: A) TOGOLESE HAD MADE EFFORT TO ACCOMMODATE USG AND B) THAT USG BELIEVED TOGOLESE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE SUCH THAT SITING THIS COMPLEX OPERATION HERE BOTH POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE. THE ONLY WAY TO TEST FIRST PROPOSITION NATURALLY WOULD BE TO APPROACH GOT AND THIS PREMATURE. HOWEVER, TOGOLESE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN MAKING FRIENDLIER NOISES FOR SOME TIME NOW, SINCE AUGUST 1975 FREEZE IN RELATIONS OVER COMLAN INCIDENT. GOT CLEARLY HOPEFUL OF OBTAINING MORE US DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND US DIRECT PRIVATE INVESTMENT. THUS IT IS FAIR GUESS THAT AFTER WEIGHING MERITS OF WACASC MOVE HERE GOT WOULD CONCLUDE THAT ITS ACQUIESCENCE WOULD CREATE OBLIGATIONAL BOND WITH US WHICH COULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO TOGO. THIS IS PRACTICAL AND HARDHEADED ANALYSIS.

6. UNFORTUNATELY, NOT ALL OF EYADEMA'S ADVISORS PLACE VALUE ON GOOD RELATIONS WITH US OR THE WEST AND HE HAS PROVED IMPULSIVELY SUSCEPTIBLE TO THE TAKING OF ADVICE WHICH HAS HAD DISRUPTIVE EFFECTS ON US-TOGOLESE, FRENCH-TOGOLESE AND TOGOLESE-CATHOLIC CHURCH RELATIONS IN PAST. THUS IN A WORST-CASE PROJECTION, THE GOT COULD USE WACASC AS A POLITICAL FOOTBALL AND MAKE LIFE COM-
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PLICATED AND MISERABLE FOR THE US. THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY WORSTCASE SCENARIO IS DEPENDENT ON PRESENTLY UNFORSEEABLE EVENTS.

7. A MORE LIKELY PROSPECT IS THAT US-TOGOLESE BILATERAL RELATIONS WILL CONTINUE ON THEIR PRESENT COURSE OF IMPROVEMENT OVER THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM, PARTICULARLY IF US AFRICAN POLICY IS PERCEIVED BY THE TOGOLESE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THEIR OWN POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ASPIRATIONS. THUS, PROOF OF THE SECOND PROPOSITION, IE, THE US CONSIDERS THE TOGOLESE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE SUCH THAT WACASC SITING IN LOME BOTH POSSIBLE AND DESIRABLE, WOULD REQUIRE MEASURED ASSESSMENT OF GOT'S DESIRE TO SEE US-TOGOLESE RELATIONS IMPROVE. WE DO NOT YET HAVE SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO MAKE CATEGORICAL STATEMENT THAT WE PERCEIVE SUCH DESIRE, HOWEVER, THERE ARE POSITIVE SIGNS AND WE WILL CONTINUE MONITORING AND REPORTING THEM. ON BALANCE, NEVERTHELESS, IT IS OUR CONCLUSION THAT WACASC SITING IN LOME IS POSSIBLE POLITICALLY AND WE ARE PREPARED, WHEN INSTRUCTED, TO MAKE PRELIMINARY AND INFORMAL INQUIRIES OF APPROPRIATE GOT OFFICIALS.

8. RECOMMENDATION: IN SUM, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WE HAVE POINTED OUT, EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT LOME BE CONSIDERED AS ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR LOCATION WACASC.

9. OUTLOOK: LOOKING FURTHER AHEAD, THE EMBASSY IS NOT UNAWARE THAT THE SUCCESSFUL SITING OF WACASC IN LOME WOULD HAVE PRECEDENT VALUE. THE BUILD-UP OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION AND COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY, WHICH IS A CONDITION OF WACASC'S MOVE HERE, COULD IN TURN BE USED TO JUSTIFY DECISIONS TO BASE OTHER REGIONAL OFFICES HERE. THE RELATIVE AVAILABILITY OF GOODS ON THE LOCAL MARKET, THE INEXPENSIVENESS OF BASING AMERICAN PERSONNEL HERE AS COMPARED TO SOME OTHER WEST AFRICAN POSTS AND THE NORMALLY RELAXED POLITICAL CLIMATE ARE ALL FACTORS WHICH WOULD APPLY TO THE SITING OF OTHER REGIONAL ACTIVITIES. THE EMBASSY STRESSES THOUGH THAT TO FOLLOW THIS ROUTE MUCH BEYOND WACASC WOULD INVOLVE A CHANGE IN THE PRESENT LOW-PROFILE LOW-PRIORITY NATURE OF US-TOGOLESE RELATIONS. UNLESS EFFECTIVE US POLICIES ARE ADOPTED TO DEVELOP CLOSER AND MORE COOPERATIVE

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RELATIONS WITH TOGO, PARTICULARLY RE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, ANY POSSIBLE LONG RUN BUILDUP OF LOME AS AN IMPORTANT BASE FOR US REGIONAL ACTIVITIES WOULD NOT BE A SOUND COURSE. PALMER

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